

MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 12, 2009 - MINUTES

In attendance: Council Members: Chairman Jacob Wagner, Tom Peluso, Lori Marchak, Jerry Johnson, Charlotte Kress, Jan Bjork, Shelly Heilweil, Kathy Berg Carolyn Robinson and Bill Murdock; Advocacy Member: Dennis Cox (AMDD) and Scott Malloy (MHC); and Staff: Glenda Howze.

Call to Order and Introductions - 12:10 PM. Chairman Wagner opened the meeting and allowed for introductions.

Public Comment - There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes - Mr. Johnson pointed out a typing error in the minutes and Ms. Howze agreed to correct it. Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Malloy seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Drop-In Center Update/Advisory Board Business - Mr. Malloy reported that John Watson is ill today and unable to attend. They are working to compile the year end data for a report that they will present to the LAC. The Drop-In Center continues to increase numbers with approximately one new person visiting per day. The average is 250-300 visitors per month. Mr. Wagner continues to give haircuts on a volunteer basis which does a lot for people's esteem and attitudes. Mr. Johnson asked if there were any facilities to promote hygiene at the State Hospital. No one knew the answer to this. Discussion took place regarding how barbers and hairdressers are often quasi-therapists as well. Mr. Wagner noted that in his case he is also a consumer and that that commonality with those he's assisting that puts them at ease also. Ms. Marchak noted how much she appreciates Jacob's service in this way.

Priority Table Updates - 1) see above. 2) The co-occurring AA meetings at the Drop-In Center have been hugely successful. Peer-to-peer requires 12-15 people in the group, so the next one will start when they are able to have commitments from that many people. 3) CIT training is the focus of the MH/Criminal Justice area right now. Mr. Malloy is writing a grant to bring additional CIT Training here. He requested a letter of support from the LAC to include with the grant. Ms. Kress made a motion to approve the writing and signing of a letter of support for these purposes. Ms. Heilweil seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously. 4) Campus - There is a meeting this week with the County to finalize the funding matters. They are moving forward with the transitional housing phase and are submitting a grant in February in hopes of securing additional funding. This will be subsidized housing for low-income, mental health consumers. It is phase II of the project but is moving along in conjunction with phase I at this point. The grant is a Garden City Community Housing Program grant through the Department of Commerce. Ms. Marchak inquired if this could fall under an economic stimulus project. Mr. Malloy stated that it is not related but possibly could be. Mr. Wagner stated that the drawings for the campus were presented at the last SAA meeting and there was a positive response to the campus plans. 5) Transportation - no update, possible changes at legislature. 6) Co-Occurring - progressing. 7-8) Public Outreach - status quo. 9) System evaluation - we need someone to take this on. Ms. Marchak and Mr. Peluso agreed to be assigned with this priority. 10) (see next agenda item)

Legislative Discussion - Mr. Peluso presented HB 111 noted that this bill was the primary discussion at the SAA summit. There are great concerns about the bill and how it might affect the authority of the SAA's. Mr. Peluso requested that he be given the blessing of the LAC to go to Helena today to testify on the bill as representing the LAC. A lengthy discussion took place regarding this request, with a majority of the LAC members present indicating that they did not feel comfortable with Mr. Peluso taking a position on the bill on behalf of the LAC because they hadn't had time to review the bill and study its merits in order to take a

position. Mr. Cox stated that the bill doesn't change the relationship between AMDD and the LAC's but cleans up a lot of "stuff" between the children and adult services. He also noted that AMDD is not seeking to change the relationship between AMDD and the LAC's or SAA's. There was no consensus on sending Mr. Peluso to Helena with an official LAC position. Discussion took place regarding a legislative committee. The original committee was Sally Miller, Tom Peluso, and Louise Brewster but no one has heard from Sally in awhile who was heading that project up.

Agency Reports - None at this time.

Other - It was agreed that in order to expedite future meetings that anyone assigned to a priority table area should provide a written update of that area to Glenda Howze before the meeting and this can be typed up and presented as a package at the meeting. It was also noted that the League of Women Voters has made mental health their main priority this year.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 PM